

Work Ahead

Unlocking the potential of an AI-ready workforce



Executive Summary

Amidst global shifts and the rapid advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI), uncertainty looms over how this technological wave will reshape the future of work. Artificial Intelligence (AI) in India isn't just a trend it's fast becoming a powerful force in shaping career trajectories.

The Work Ahead report, shows that Indian professionals are embracing AI as a career accelerator, with mid-career workers (aged 35–54) leading the upskilling charge. Confidence in adapting to AI tools like Generative AI and Agentic AI is high, and demand for future-ready training is growing.

This shift is not only about staying relevant, it's about advancing careers and building long-term job security. With nearly one-third of professionals concerned about being left behind, the desire for AI learning is reshaping expectations from employers. Workers aren't just reacting to change they're actively preparing to lead it.

These insights show that AI is moving from hype to habit, becoming as integral as email or messaging platforms in Indian workplaces. And while the appetite to learn is strong, workers are asking for more, hence employers need to prioritize and provide structured support tools, time, and training to make that learning truly effective.

We help people get jobs.



“*There’s a determined confidence building across India’s workforce. Mid-career professionals, in particular, are not only using AI but actively seeking upskilling opportunities to master it. The rise in interest around Agentic AI signals that we are at the beginning of a transformation, one where job seekers are not just responding to change, but leading it.*”

Sashi Kumar

Head of Sales, Indeed India

AI upskilling is becoming critical for mid-career professionals to thrive

India's AI trailblazers are in their prime

In India, it's the mid-career professionals (aged 35–54) who are emerging as the most confident and future-focused segment of the workforce. As AI reshapes job roles, this group isn't just adapting; they're taking charge.

- 49% of professionals aged 35–54 say they feel confident using the AI technologies expected to define work in the next 2–5 years.
- 56% are actively seeking more training to stay ahead.

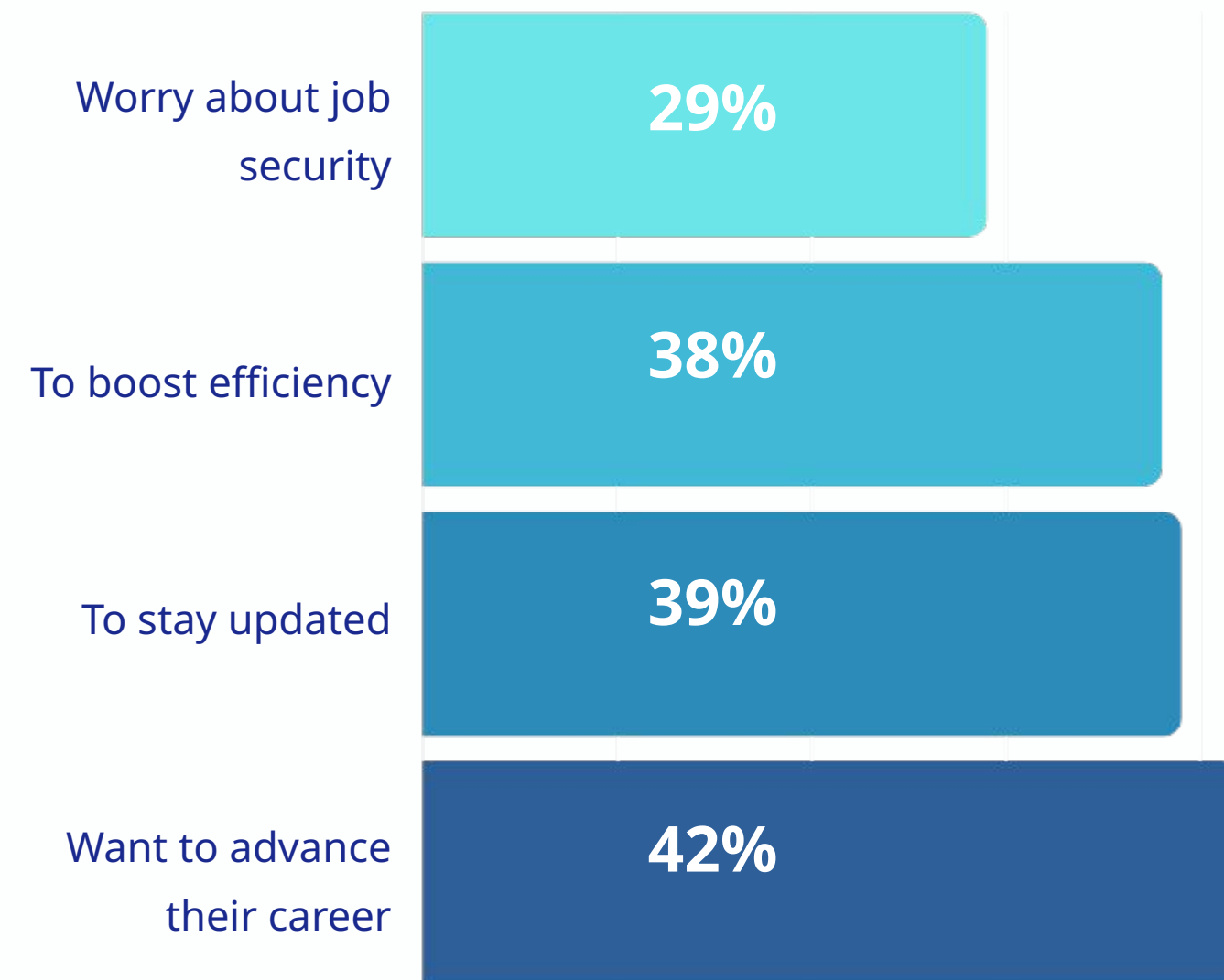
In contrast, their younger counterparts (ages 18–24) are still catching up:

- Only 36% feel confident
- 41% want more training

Their motivations go beyond curiosity, they're rooted in career advancement and job relevance.

Mid-career professionals are preparing for the AI shift, actively building skills to stay relevant, resilient, and ready for tomorrow.

Motivations for training



What employees need from employers?

Workers are motivated, but building the right support system is key to real readiness

With AI moving from hype to workplace reality, Indian professionals are clear about the support they need to thrive. From intuitive tools to structured time and space for learning, the workforce is seeking a solid foundation to stay competitive in an AI-powered future.

- 32% want user-friendly and well-documented tools
- 31% are asking for dedicated learning time during the workday
- 30% prefer low-pressure environments to experiment and practice
- 29% seek self-paced online training that fits into their routine

These preferences cut across sectors and experience levels, showing that readiness isn't just about motivation but about having the right ecosystem.

Challenges faced by employees



A successful AI transition hinges on user-friendly tech and structured learning at work.

Rising AI adoption, growing employee confidence

Indian professionals are integrating AI into their everyday workflows

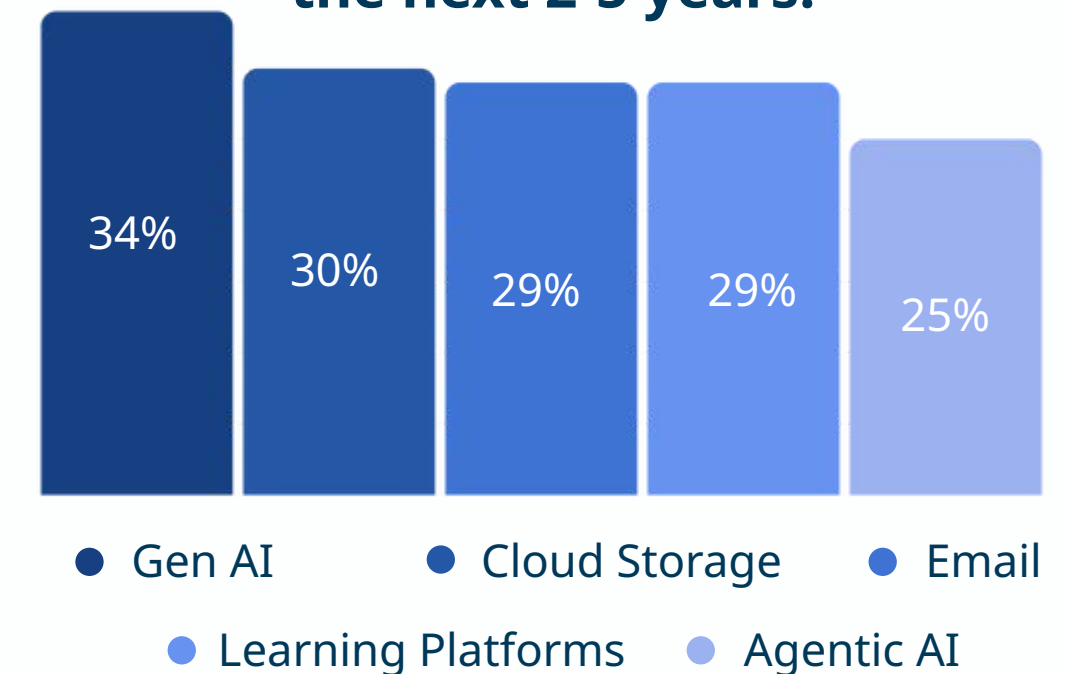
AI is no longer on the horizon, it's already here, shaping how Indians work and grow. A significant 34% of professionals in India expect to frequently use Generative AI in the next 2–5 years, while 1 in 4 is gearing up to adopt Agentic AI, capable of handling complex tasks autonomously.

Today's workplace tech stack in India includes a mix of traditional tools like email and cloud storage, and cutting-edge AI. Nearly 9 in 10 workers (90%) say they feel competent using current workplace technologies, and an overwhelming 97% find them helpful.

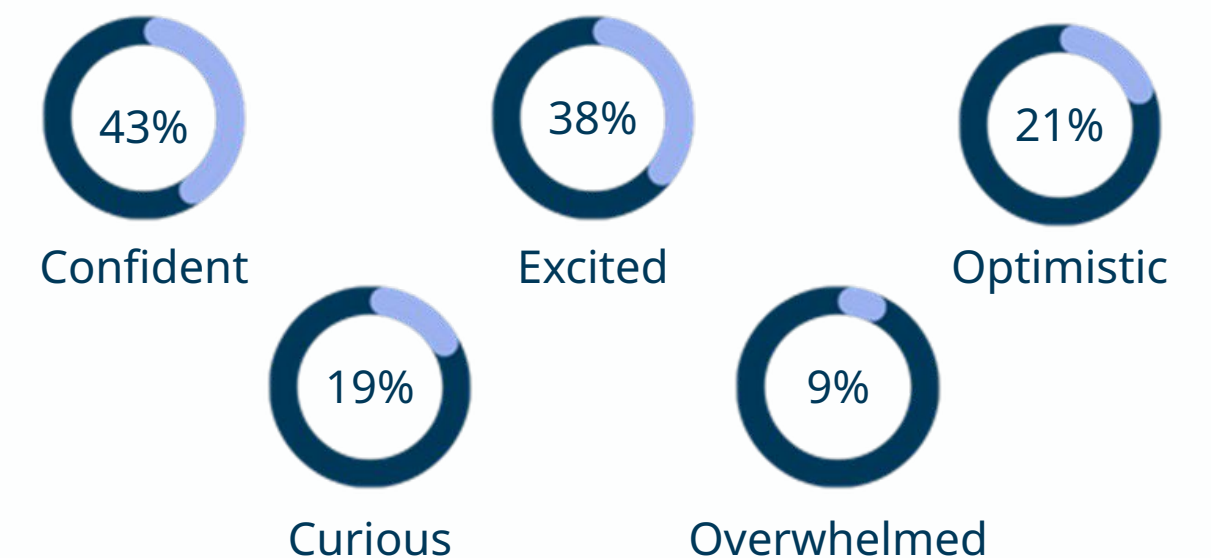
72% of blue-collar workers say technology is helpful to their jobs. This growing comfort with AI shows that it's no longer experimental but essential.

AI is now a core part of India's workplace, with employees growing more confident and ready to adopt it.

Top technologies employees expect to use in the next 2-5 years:



What are the employee sentiments about using tech at work?



India's workforce: what's driving progress, what's holding them back

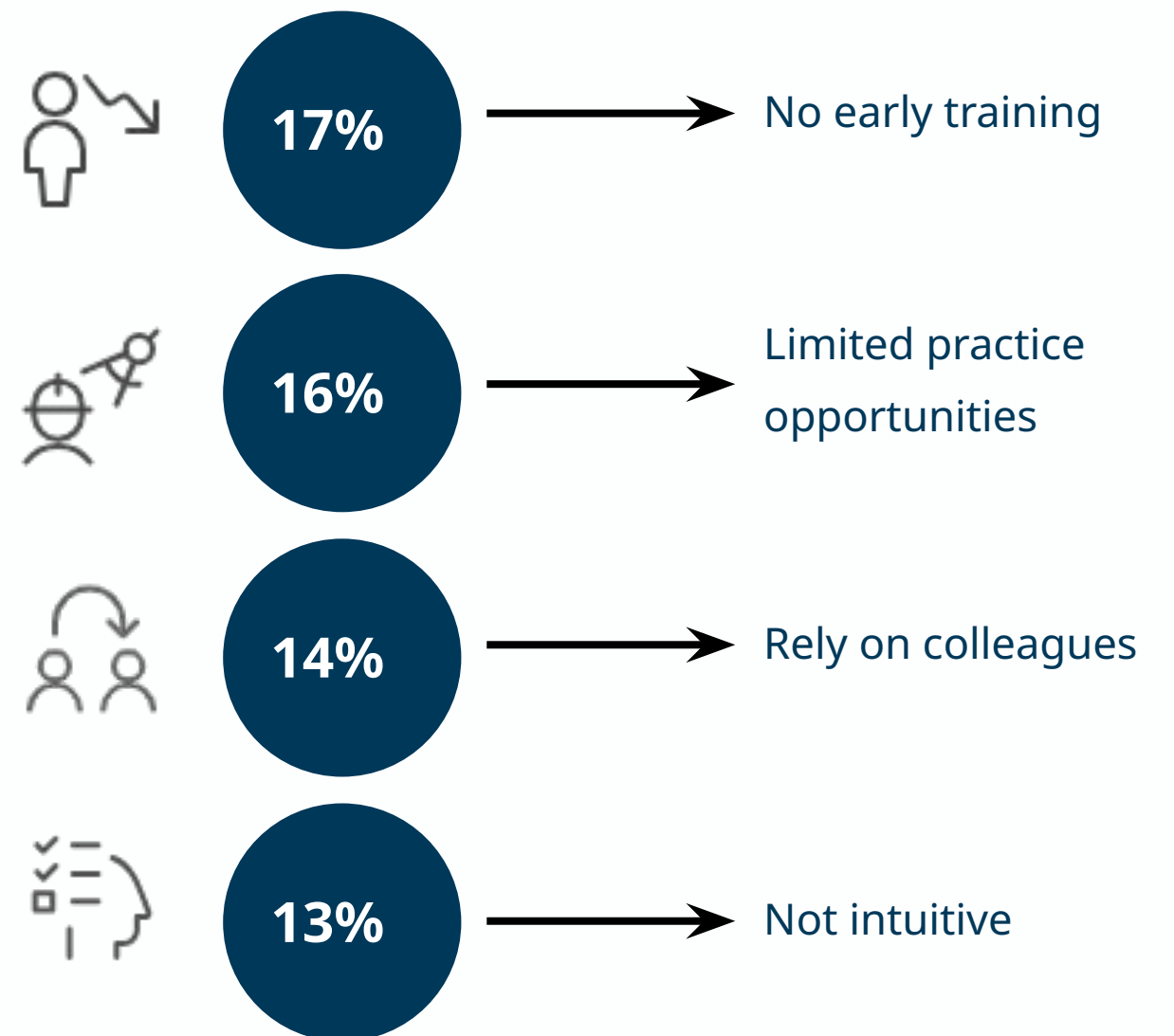
Bridging the gap in tech adoption through access, training, and support

Indian professionals are embracing workplace technologies, from traditional tools to cutting-edge AI, but uneven access to training and support remains a challenge. A significant 90% feel competent using current workplace technologies, and workers cite key enablers such as belief in tech's importance (32%), sufficient training (31%), and supportive managers (30%) for building their confidence and helping them adapt to evolving digital demands.

From navigating schedules to communicating better or simplifying repetitive tasks, tech is already making a difference. But adoption without enablement risks deepening the divide. While confidence is rising, structured support is still limited. For instance, only 38% of blue-collar workers report having access to formal company-led training, highlighting a critical need for inclusive enablement strategies.

Tech adoption is rising, but without seamless access to training and support, workplace readiness is a challenge that needs to be addressed

Barriers to technology adoption



...as we move ahead, upskilling in AI wouldn't just be a good practice; it'll be the career accelerator. Workers who build AI skills will be better positioned for higher pay, promotions, and future roles, a trend that we already see picking up. In India, careers flourish where learning meets opportunity. AI upskilling is fast becoming the new currency of professional growth.”

Sashi Kumar

Head of Sales, Indeed India

Methodology

The research was conducted by Censuswide among a sample of 3001 Workers (blue-collar and white-collar) and Business leaders across India. The data was collected in May 2025 and the survey was administered across 12+ industries, including technology, retail, manufacturing, travel, legal, healthcare, HR, and more, spanning designation levels from clerical to business owners.

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